



Greater
Mekong
Subregion

Greater Mekong Subregion

Economic Cooperation Program

A More Integrated, Prosperous, Sustainable, and Inclusive Greater Mekong Subregion



How the GMS Program Works

The Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Program is managed by the leaders, ministers, and senior officials of the six GMS member countries (Figure 1). The program is based on continuing consultation and dialogue among GMS member countries. The institutional arrangements for the GMS Program are pragmatic and flexible. The GMS institutional structure has four levels: (i) the [Leaders' Summit](#), (ii) the [Ministerial Conference](#), (iii) Senior Officials' Meetings, and (iv) the working groups and forums in the priority sectors. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) provides [overall secretariat support](#) to the GMS Program in coordination with national secretariats in each of the GMS countries.

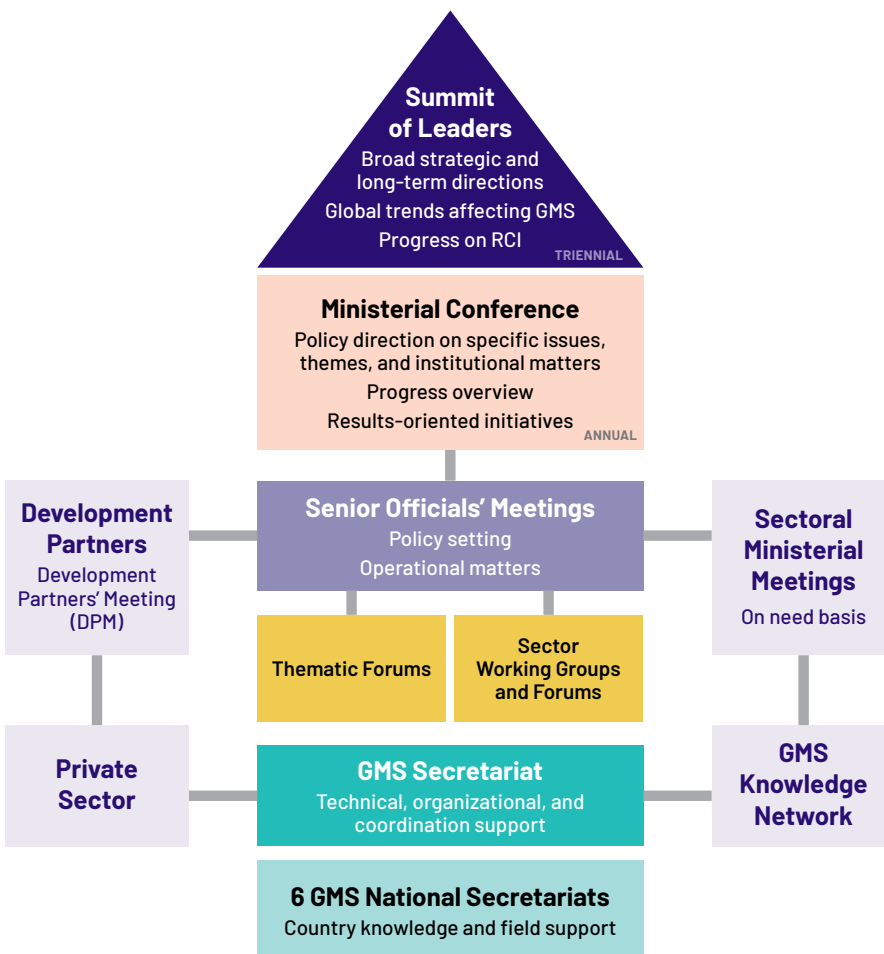


Figure 1: GMS Institutional Structure
Source: GMS Secretariat

GMS Quick Facts

- **History:** Established in 1992
- **Member countries:**
 - Cambodia
 - Lao People's Democratic Republic
 - Myanmar
 - the People's Republic of China (Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region)
 - Thailand
 - Viet Nam
- **Three Pillars:**
 - Community
 - Connectivity
 - Competitiveness

Sectoral Ministerial Meetings

1. CBTA Joint Committee Meeting
2. Environment Ministers' Meeting
3. Agriculture Ministers' Meeting
4. Tourism Ministers' Meeting

Thematic Forums

1. Economic Corridors Forum (ECF) - Annual
2. GMS Economic Corridors Governors' Forum - Annual; spearheaded by PRC
3. Business Council
4. Development Partners' Meeting
5. GMS Knowledge Network

Sector Working Groups, Task Forces, and Forums*

1. Sub-regional Transport Forum
2. CBTA National Transport Facilitation Committee
3. GMS Railways Association
4. Energy Transition Taskforce
5. Working Group on Environment
6. Working Group on Agriculture
7. Working Group on Tourism
8. Working Group on Health Cooperation
9. Working Group on Urban Development
10. Taskforce on Trade and Investment

*In some cases, Task Forces are created for an interim period with the intention of formalizing into Working Groups.

GMS Program Sectors

Agriculture

GMS agriculture priorities encourage the promotion of higher food safety and quality standards to boost exports, climate- and environment-friendly production practices, and sustenance of natural assets with an emphasis on small-scale farmers and micro, small, and medium-sized agro-enterprises. The [GMS Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security Program](#) (GMS SAFSP) assists the GMS countries in tackling key climate change challenges to their agricultural sectors.

Energy

The GMS Program promotes a just energy transition to low-carbon and renewable energy resources by (i) expanding clean energy trade, including the development of interconnections; (ii) initiating efficiency and conservation measures; and (iii) strengthening capacities for energy transition. Through the [GMS Energy Transition Task Force](#), the program is creating an open platform for enhanced energy cooperation with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and development partners.

Environment

The GMS Program aims to enhance environmental sustainability and climate change resilience in the subregion. The [GMS Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Program](#) focuses on building climate and disaster resilience, facilitating low-carbon transitions, promoting climate-smart landscapes, enhancing environmental quality through pollution control and sustainable waste management, deploying digital technologies for climate actions, and financing low-carbon and climate-resilient infrastructure and technologies.

Health

GMS health priorities focus on communicable disease control through cross-border surveillance and modeling, information exchange, implementation of international health regulations, and pandemic preparedness. The GMS Program also aims to accelerate universal health coverage, strengthen health systems to manage public health threats, and support compliance with the World Health Organization's International Health Regulations through a unified "One Health Approach."

Tourism

GMS tourism promotes post-Covid pandemic recovery efforts and the development of higher value-added and secondary destinations. It also strengthens human capital, connectivity infrastructure, public-private linkages, and environmental sustainability.

GMS tourism program promotes the subregion as a single destination with diverse, high-quality subregional products, distributing tourism benefits widely while minimizing adverse impacts.

Transport

The GMS Program is advancing intermodal transport, enhancing cross-border logistics, and improving road safety. It focuses on developing railways, ports, and inland waterways, as well as promoting investments in airports and secondary roads to boost regional connectivity and support underserved communities. Transport connectivity gains are maximized through cross-border transport in line with the Early Harvest (EH) Implementation of GMS Cross-Border Transport Facilitation Agreement (CBTA), which provides a flagship framework to accelerate efficient cross-border movement of goods, vehicles, and people in the subregion.¹ The GMS Transport Sector Strategy 2030 provides a unified framework for cooperation in these efforts.

¹ Prior to GMS-2030, transport and trade facilitation (TTF) was a separate sector of the GMS Program. Currently, TTF activities are subsumed under the transport and trade and investment facilitation sectors.

Trade and Investment Facilitation

GMS-2030 mandates the GMS Program to continue its efforts to develop trade and facilitate investment in the subregion and beyond. GMS-2030 is accelerating cross-border trade facilitation, the EH implementation of GMS CBTA, and easing constraints to the flow of investment within the subregion and foreign direct investment from outside the GMS. The GMS Taskforce on Trade and Investment, to be elevated as a GMS Working Group on Trade and Investment, acts as a strategic advisory body and collaborates with a broad range of stakeholders.

Urban Development

Urban development priorities focus on investing in priority urban infrastructure and services in small and medium-sized cities along the GMS transport corridors to accommodate population growth, transform transport corridors into economic corridors, and enhance rural access to jobs and markets. GMS cooperation also promotes measures for current and future crisis response. A holistic approach to city planning is encouraged to ensure cities are green, smart, competitive, resilient, safe, and inclusive.

GMS Strategic Framework 2030

GMS Leaders endorsed the [GMS Economic Cooperation Program Strategic Framework 2030](#) (GMS-2030) at the 7th GMS Summit of Leaders hosted by Cambodia in September 2021. It aims to tackle serious and emerging challenges and take advantage of immense opportunities available in the new and dynamic decade.

The three pillars of the GMS Program—Community, Connectivity, Competitiveness (3Cs)—aim to

- build a greater sense of **community** where the well-being of all citizens is pursued through the development of a healthy and environmentally sustainable GMS community;
- increase **connectivity** within the subregion and the rest of Asia through promoting further linkages in transport and energy; and
- enhance **competitiveness** post-coronavirus disease (COVID-19) through restoring and promoting trade and facilitating investment, agriculture, tourism, urban development in a climate-friendly manner and working together to build an open, fair, just, and nondiscriminatory business environment.

The **GMS-2030 Vision** is to develop a more integrated, prosperous, sustainable, and inclusive subregion.

To achieve the vision, **GMS-2030** establishes a **Mission Statement for the GMS Program**:

A subregional cooperation program focused on fundamental strengths of community, connectivity, and competitiveness, while embracing the core principles of environmental sustainability and resilience, internal and external integration, and inclusivity, for building a GMS community with a bright shared future.

GMS 2030 Innovative Approaches and Crosscutting Themes and Initiatives

GMS-2030 provides a path to effectively address the subregion’s challenges and leverage longer-term trends through innovative approaches across critical crosscutting areas: **digital revolution; enhanced spatial approach; dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and capacity building; private sector solutions; GMS as an open platform; and a results framework.**



Harnessing Digital Revolution

Digitalization is central to the efforts of the GMS to build a robust, regionally integrated economy in 2030. The GMS-2030 encourages members to promote inclusive digitalization and the use of advanced technologies in all GMS Program activities and projects. The [GMS Digital Economy Cooperation Initiative](#) was endorsed, providing a framework for cooperation in all aspects of the digital revolution.

Enhancing the Spatial Approach

The [economic corridor approach](#) was adopted to help accelerate subregional development by linking production, trade, and infrastructure within a specific geographic area. The three main corridors of the GMS are the East–West Economic Corridor, North–South Economic Corridor, and Southern Economic Corridor (Figure 2). In line with the approach to deepen spatial growth in the GMS, the development of border and specific areas along the GMS economic corridors was pursued.

Conducting Deeper Dialogue, Knowledge-Sharing, and Capacity Building

Policy dialogue in several GMS sectors has intensified to optimize the impact of GMS projects, including on the implementation of key agreements in various sectors and areas of cooperation.

Embracing Private Sector Solutions

Recognizing the necessity of leveraging the private sector’s expertise, knowledge, and financing to attain the GMS countries’ growth and Sustainable Development Goal commitments, a range of private sector solutions is considered.

GMS as an Open Platform

The GMS Program cooperates closely with other regional cooperation and integration initiatives. GMS-2030 promotes further participation by local governments, development partners, academia, and civil society in the GMS Program.

Establishing a Results Framework

The GMS Results Framework is used to monitor, assess, and guide the GMS 2030 implementation toward achieving the vision and program mission.

The Regional Investment Framework

The [GMS Regional Investment Framework \(RIF\)](#) is a three-year rolling pipeline of near-term priority projects aligned with GMS-2030. The new project selection criteria aim to include quality projects in the RIF.

Gender

The GMS Gender Strategy and the GMS Gender Strategy Implementation Plan 2025-2030 aim to improve gender mainstreaming activities to ensure equal access and participation in opportunities arising from the GMS Program, complement subregional efforts to explicitly address gender-based barriers, and address pervasive gender norms that disadvantage one group over another.



Learn more about the GMS Program's crosscutting innovative approaches through our knowledge products.



[The Greater Mekong Subregion Economic Cooperation Program Strategic Framework 2030](#)



[The Greater Mekong Subregion Program Strategy 2030: Results Framework](#)



[GMS Gender Strategy](#)



[The Greater Mekong Subregion 2030 and Beyond](#)



[Deepening Development Partners' Engagement in the Greater Mekong Subregion](#)



[GMS Knowledge Network](#)

New GMS Program Initiatives



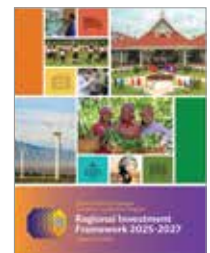
The Greater Mekong Subregion Innovation Strategy for Development 2030



Greater Mekong Subregion Digitalization Action Plan (2025-2027)



Greater Mekong Subregion Gender Strategy Implementation Plan 2025-2030



GMS Economic Cooperation Program Regional Investment Framework 2025-2027



Strengthening Local Government Engagement in the Greater Mekong Subregion



GMS 2030 Strategic Framework for Accelerating Climate Action and Environmental Sustainability



Greater Mekong Subregion Health Sector Strategy, 2024-2030 - Regional Health Cooperation



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About the Greater Mekong Subregion Economic Cooperation Program

The Greater Mekong Subregion is made up of Cambodia, the People's Republic of China (specifically Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region), the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam. In 1992, with assistance from the Asian Development Bank and building on their shared histories and cultures, the six countries of the GMS launched a program of subregional economic cooperation—the GMS Program—to enhance their economic relations. The GMS Program covers the following priority sectors: agriculture, energy, environment, health, tourism, transport, trade and investment facilitation, and urban development.



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Printed in the Philippines

 Printed on recycled paper